

NORMAN REAPPORTIONMENT AD HOC COMMITTEE MINUTES

September 8, 2021

The Reapportionment Ad Hoc Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma met in the Executive Conference Room of the Norman Municipal Building at 201 West Gray Street on Wednesday, September 8, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted at the Norman Municipal Building at 201-A West Gray at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting and online at https://www.normanok.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2021-09-02_reapportionment_ad_hoc_committee_agenda.pdf (normanok.gov).

Item No. 1, being:

CALL TO ORDER.

Chair Aleisha Karjala called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

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Item No. 2, being:

ROLL CALL.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Larla Turner
Aleisha Karjala
Katherine Leidy (arrived 6:07)
Kay Holladay
Karen Goodchild
Michael Zorba
Rich Lubbers (arrived 6:15)
Joshua Hinkle
Christopher Tall Bear

MEMBERS ABSENT

John Johnson

A quorum was present.

CITY STAFF PRESENT

Joyce Green, GIS Services Manager
Kathryn Walker, City Attorney
Roné Tromble, Administrative Technician

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Item No. 3, being:

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION RELATED TO ANNUAL POPULATION FIGURES AND THEIR EFFECT ON THE CITY'S WARD SYSTEM.

ITEMS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD.

1. Wards In Progress Chart
2. Incomplete Draft 9-2-2021 Map

DISCUSSION BY THE COMMITTEE.

Chair Karjala suggested starting work by looking at Ward 2, Ward 3, and Ward 4 first, because they are landlocked and we need to get those right, and then go on to look at Wards 8, 6, 5, 1 and 7 on the outside. The change that was made at the last meeting to Ward 2 is probably good; the new percentage was 4.7%. We added the half-circle of Precinct 19 south of Robinson that was part of Ward 8. She proposed leaving Ward 2 alone.

At the previous meeting, some changes were made to Ward 3; the northern part north of Rock Creek Road was put in Ward 8. Ward 3 is not experiencing growth. Chair Karjala suggested 5.87% seems a little high. It was suggested moving the north boundary of Ward 3 down to Robinson, which didn't make much of a change. Moving the north edge of Ward 3 down to Main Street resulted in -3.7%. It was decided to leave the north edge at Rock Creek Road with a deviation of 5.87% because we're not expecting a lot of growth in Ward 3, and there is a lot of floodplain.

Chair Karjala suggested adding the notch at the northwest corner of Ward 4, currently in Ward 8 (Berry to Flood south of Robinson), into Ward 4. It's a random neighborhood to be in Ward 8. Ms. Holladay recommended the vertical sliver at the northwest corner of Ward 7 be added to Ward 4. Chair Karjala commented that it would put the University all in Ward 4, whereas now the University is divided between two separate wards, Ward 4 and Ward 7. That change brings the deviation to -2.8% and puts a precinct back together. Chair Karjala commented that having the University in two wards may help to keep the University of Oklahoma happy so they get along with the City well; if more than one Councilperson is responsible for that area, then they have more responsiveness on City Council. Mr. Hinkle added that it also prevents a future conflict of interest should a University employee be the one person that runs and wins that ward.

Mr. Hinkle commented that he had emailed Ms. Green a suggestion for putting the area with Sutton Place, the Cleveland County Fairgrounds, and Sutton Wilderness into Ward 4. Ms. Green indicated that proposed change is reflected on the map. Mr. Hinkle said Ward 4 would have a portion of the University, downtown Norman, and a state park in it; it's already a Core ward. That brings the population to 15,931, with a deviation of -0.4%.

Ms. Green indicated Ward 7 is including a big change that was emailed in that was more than 7 needed. She suggested taking it back close to its original boundaries. Mr. Hinkle suggested moving the triangle on the east of the railroad tracks south of Lindsey out of Ward 7 and into Ward 1. That area has some apartments, but is largely business. That

puts Ward 8 at 0.4%.

Ms. Green reported Ward 1 is now 5.52% and it started at -6%; the population is 16,851.

Ms. Goodchild commented that even though Ward 6 looks to be negative, they have a lot of proposed construction (on the residential construction permit activity map). Ms. Holladay noted the time period for the map is from 2011 to 2020. Ms. Green explained that the vast majority of that is reflected in the census. The things that are out in the future are the plats. Some of the plats are going to be commercial; there might be a little bit of residential. Mr. Hinkle commented that Wards 6 and 8, over the last 10 years, have been the fastest growing because of the development west of I-35 and north of Rock Creek/south of Tecumseh areas.

Ms. Green indicated Ward 8 and Ward 6 are down quite a bit and are both out of range. Currently Wards 1, 5, 3, and 2 are high, with Wards 3 and 2 being not too bad. She suggested taking some of Ward 6 into 8, and then from Ward 5 into 6. Mr. Hinkle suggested putting the Sutton Place neighborhood back in Ward 8, resulting in a deviation of -2.54% and population of 15,596. Ms. Green said Ward 8 is an area that is going to experience growth.

Chair Karjala reported Ward 6 is currently -17.2%. It needs to be closer to 0, but since it's growing, it doesn't have to necessarily be positive. Ms. Green suggested putting all of Precinct 12 into Ward 6, and raised the idea of extending Ward 6 out to Little River. Ms. Goodchild expressed concern about the watershed, the aquifer, and building in what is farmland. Chair Karjala pointed out that changing the ward boundaries isn't going to change the fact that there won't be any growth going on out there. Ms. Goodchild said that Ward 5, being farmland, has a different set of parameters. Ward 5 is 3.79% and because of where we are we should not be having a lot of growth. If we take that large of a chunk, will we get to negative numbers in Ward 5? It seems like a big chunk of farmland. Chair Karjala said it would give the east side of town more political representation, because there would be two different Council members representing the more rural area. Ms. Goodchild added there is also a lot of tribal land in Ward 5. She suggested it would be difficult for someone to represent both rural farmland as well as urban areas; they have different kinds of issues. Mr. Hinkle pointed out those same agricultural issues that are being expanded out to 72nd north of Rock Creek will be lumped into the same issues as University North Park in Ward 8, as currently proposed. Ms. Goodchild said she was trying to keep common interests together. Chair Karjala responded that the committee talked about how Norman is not a community of communities, and she thinks that, in some ways, it's been bad for the east side to be known as the east side, as if they all have the same things. Core Norman doesn't have all the same concerns. In Ward 2 and Ward 4 not everybody is of a like mind, either. Ms. Turner added that putting some of Ward 5 in Ward 6 would increase representation on the east side. Ms. Goodchild expressed concern about the City wells that have been dug in Ward 5 and recharging the aquifer. Lake Thunderbird was made to last 100 years; we're at 52 years. There is farmland in Ward 5 that benefits all of Norman.

Ms. Green suggested starting by expanding Ward 6 to 48th NE, because that's more or less the aquifer line. Chair Karjala agreed to expand Ward 6 from Indian Hills to 48th down to Alameda. That change brought Ward 6 up to -13%. Mr. Zorba suggested going east to 60th down to Alameda, which brought Ward 6 to -10%. Ms. Green suggested taking the square mile bounded by Robinson on the north, 24th NE on the west, 36th NE on the east, and Alameda on the south and moving it from Ward 1 to Ward 6. Chair Karjala suggested putting the square mile with Sutton Place into Ward 6, from Ward 4. Ms. Green said that puts Ward 6 at -1%. Chair Karjala indicated it puts Ward 4 at -5.46%. Mr. Zorba suggested, to regain in Ward 4, adding a triangle, going south of Imhoff and taking that chunk all the way south to the county line and then over west to the county line. Ms. Green said that would be way too much.

Mr. Lubbers asked if the numbers are within a variation of 10 at the moment, right? Ms. Green said just slightly over it. Ward 7 is pretty much at 0, so it's probably good. Ward 1 is a little high, but I don't know that there's going to be any growth in there. Ward 4 is a little high; there's not going to be any growth in there. Ward 3, likewise. Ward 8 is 2 under. Ward 2 is high and Ward 3 is high, but we're not expecting any growth in those.

Ms. Goodchild said at the last meeting she thought we talked about there was going to be growth to 48th. Ms. Green explained that Ward 5 has a huge amount of potential growth down along Highway 9. In the northern area, there's not much growth potential because it's in the aquifer. It's in a lot of sensitive areas, and it's probably not going to have huge growth. But the area down along Highway 9 is going to see growth, and quite a bit of it. So if Ward 5 stays low that should be fine.

Ms. Goodchild said what concerns me is you have 1, 2, 3 families that live on a mile section versus a neighborhood with 400 homes. We talk about they're going to have representation, but I'm just wondering how much representation. Mr. Lubbers commented if we equalize population, it doesn't matter whether it comes out of a farm voter or an urban/suburban voter. It's still one voter, one vote. Ms. Green added that, unfortunately, there are not enough farm families to create an entire ward. There's about 10,000 out there, and you need about 16,000 people to make a ward.

Mr. Zorba asked how often the boundaries are changed. Chair Karjala responded every 10 years. Ms. Green added there are other things that can trigger a review. If we annex something, or have a natural disaster that took out half the City and people didn't build back. But in the scheme of things, we only do it every 10 years.

Ms. Green suggested moving the portion of Precinct 76 south of Rock Creek Road to Robinson between 36th Avenue NW and I-35 from Ward 8 to Ward 3. There isn't going to be growth in 3.

Chair Karjala asked if a variation of 10.01 is a bad thing? Can we do 10.01? I'm perfectly happy with this map. I think we've done a pretty good job that makes a lot of sense. Mr. Zorba asked if the map can have color added. Ms. Green added color and Ms. Walker printed copies for review.

Ms. Holladay was concerned about the impact that two Councilpeople living pretty close together. Ms. Green noted that we haven't looked at where the Councilpeople live. Ms. Walker explained that there are provisions that will protect them in their current seats, so no one will be ousted as a result of this process.

Ms. Holladay asked the number for Ward 4. Ms. Green indicated it is right at the ideal; basically -0.7%. Chair Karjala commented the lines look cleaner.

Ms. Goodchild asked if the Ag zoning is staying the same. Chair Karjala explained this doesn't change zoning at all. Ms. Green concurred.

Chair Karjala asked if the committee needs another meeting. Ms. Holladay asked to review the print copy before making the decision. Mr. Zorba said he didn't think another meeting was needed. Ms. Green said if the committee doesn't need to meet again, we can set the public hearing. At the public hearing, the plan is usually presented by the chair.

Rich Lubbers moved to take the proposed ward boundaries to public hearing. Katherine Leidy seconded.

Ayes	Christopher Tall Bear, Larla Turner, Aleisha Karjala, Katherine Leidy, Kay Holladay, Rich Lubbers, Joshua Hinkle
Nays	Michael Zorba
Did Not Vote	Karen Goodchild

Chair Karjala reported the ayes have it. So we're ready to take it to public hearing. Thank you for your hard work. I think the map looks pretty and it's equalized. I think that's the fairest way to do that. I think it worked out well. So we don't need to meet on Monday.

Ms. Green said we will need to figure out when we should go to public hearing. Typically the entire committee comes to the public hearing, unless somebody has a conflict. If the chair has a conflict, then the vice chair will get to present it.

Ms. Walker said the Council has to have a public hearing also. The committee need to be at the public hearing for the committee because then you'll vote on a resolution adopting the boundaries, if you're ready to do that, after public hearing. The hearing has to be 10 days before voting on the resolution, not the same day.

Chair Karjala suggested that committee members share the map on their ward pages or if you're friends on Facebook with people in the ward and let them comment to you. Ms. Green said she will make a web app tomorrow where you can pull it up and people can zoom around and see how it affects things. Ms. Turner asked to be provided with that link, too. Ms. Green will send it to committee members first. Staff will also probably put it in some sort of press release. We have to advertise it, probably in the Transcript. If we can get an article in the Transcript, we might try to do that so it will reach as many people as possible. We'll pass it to you to put out on social media. Try to reach people as many

ways as we can, because you do want people to know that it's changing and you do want to have public comment into it.

Mr. Zorba asked at what point Councilmembers comment. Ms. Walker explained they will have their own public hearing before Council, and then Council will have to vote on it. That's when they'll make their comments. Chair Karjala asked if it come back to committee, or if Council can change it. Ms. Green responded that Council can change it. It didn't used to be that way, but it is now. The Charter has changed between this time and the last time. Ms. Walker reported last time they rejected the recommendation. Ms. Green clarified that we used to do this every year. They felt that the commission was changing it too often, so the Charter changed to do it every 10 years with the census.

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Item No. 6, being:

MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION OF COMMITTEE AND STAFF.

Staff will notify the Committee when they have looked at room availability and the legal notice requirements for the public hearing.

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Item No. 7, being:

ADJOURNMENT.

There being no further discussion and no objection, the meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Passed and approved this 21st day of October, 2021.



Rich Lubbers, Secretary
Reapportionment Ad Hoc Committee